

Ad Hoc Professional Satisfaction Survey of MDs, RNs, and SWs

The Ad Hoc Committee to Defend Health Care conducted a survey among randomly selected Massachusetts physicians (MDs) and nurses (RNs) by interview and questionnaire from June through November, 2002, and with randomly selected social workers (SWs) from January through May 2003. This project was funded in part by an unrestricted grant from the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Foundation of Massachusetts and conducted with the assistance of Williams and Associates, a respected polling organization. Questions were taken from or modeled after existing instruments. Dana Saffron, PhD. consulted. Some conclusions follow.

Massachusetts' doctors, nurses, and social workers share a very high level of dissatisfaction .	MDs	RNs	SWs
• dissatisfied with their professional work	39%	16%	48%
• less satisfied now than they were 5 years ago	54%	26%	36%
• have thought of leaving their profession	49%	53%	46%
• would recommend their profession to a college undergraduate	55%	80%	91%

The origins of professional dissatisfaction are many.	MDs	RNs	SWs
• felt that their time with patients had declined over the past 5 years	51%	76%	55%
• dissatisfied with the amount of time they can spend with patients	28%	53%	18%
• felt that their earnings had declined somewhat or significantly over the last 5 years	60%	6%	54%
• felt that work stress was excessive	44%	16%	9%
• were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the degree of personal autonomy in clinical decision-making	34%	18%	27%
• were dissatisfied with the time they had available for family and personal life	48%	22%	55%
• listed lack of staff/low staffing levels as the most aggravating aspect of their professional work		66%	

There is considerable dissatisfaction with managed care in Massachusetts.	MDs	RNs	SWs
• felt that they spend an "inordinate" amount of time trying to get health plan approval for patient care	63%		55%
• felt that they are unable to provide the quality of care they would like because of constraints imposed by health plans some of the time or more frequently	75%		82%
• listed insurance companies and HMOs as the most aggravating aspect of their profession	48%		
• listed paper work and HMOs as the most aggravating aspect of their profession			47%

There is a sense of hopelessness and frustration about the ability of the system to change for the better.	MDs	RNs	SWs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> felt that the system would probably or definitely not improve over the next 5 years 	86%	71%	82%

The lack of universal health care access is a major concern.	MDs	RNs	SWs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> felt that the lack of health care access by 400,000 MA residents was a big problem 	86%	97%	100%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saw politicians as barriers to universal health care access 	62%	61%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saw HMOs as barriers 	36 %	48%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saw the cost as a barrier 	51%	46%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saw the lack of public awareness, agreement or education as the greatest barrier to universal health care 			94%

Solutions for change vary by profession.	MDs	RNs	SWs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> see improved administrative efficiency as somewhat or very important 	91%	91%	82%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support comprehensive change as opposed to incremental change 	44%	32%	54%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> oppose comprehensive change 	13%	54%	18%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> would probably or definitely take a 5-10 % cut in personal income in order to get universal health care access 	38%	43%	45%

Data compiled by John D. Goodson M. D.